

Advisory Committee of Council Staff Report



To Heritage Guelph
Date Monday, April 8, 2024
Subject **9 Omar Street: Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report**

Recommendation

1. THAT the comments provided by Heritage Guelph members on the '9 Omar Street: Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report' be provided to staff and Council for their consideration.
2. THAT Heritage Guelph advise City Council that 9 Omar Street does not meet the provincial criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest as outlined in O. Reg 9/06.

Description

This information report provides a cultural heritage evaluation and determination of cultural heritage value or interest for 9 Omar Street prepared in accordance with O. Reg 9/06 and Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for Heritage Guelph's review and comment.

Executive Summary

Key Findings

9 Omar Street is listed as a non-designated built heritage resource on the City of Guelph's Municipal Register of Cultural Heritage Properties under Part IV, Section 27 of the Ontario Heritage Act. This report concludes that 9 Omar Street does not meet any of the nine prescribed criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest, in accordance with Ontario Regulation 9/06 made under the Ontario Heritage Act.

Cultural Evaluation Report

The property known as 9 Omar Street is located on the southeast side of Omar Street east of Alma Street (Attachment-1, Figure 1). The property is described historically as Part of Lots 62 and 64 from Plan 258 and currently as Part 1 on Plan 61R-22379 registered in December 2022 (Attachment-1, Figure 2).

9 Omar Street contains a small, single-storey, wood frame dwelling with a side gable roof and a transverse gable roof tail (Attachment-1, Figures 3, 4 and 5). The façade has three bays with a centre door flanked by two front windows. The front door and windows have concrete lug sills with modern wood trim added to create an architrave head and side casings. Although the window sashes are wood they likely date from the early 20th century. All exterior walls of the building have been clad with modern, wood board and batten siding and sits on a concrete basement.

Historic Background

Although Cooper's Map of the Town of Guelph circa 1875 (Attachment-2, Figure 7) does not show the real property of 9 Omar Street, Lots 62 and 64 were created by the registration of Plan 28 (Attachment-2, Figure 6) in 1855 an early subdivision of property owned by George J. Grange in the Junction area. By 1877 the lot fabric was reiterated by the registration of Plan 258 (Attachment-2, Figure 8). As shown in excerpts from the title abstract for Town of Guelph (Attachment-2, Figure 9) Thomas Flaherty purchased lot 62 in 1877 from the executors of George J. Grange. By 1882 the lot was sold to Mary Flaherty and then passed by Mary Flaherty's will to John Flaherty. John Flaherty purchased Lot 64 from Edmund Harvey in 1896 and appears as the owner and resident of 9 Omar Street in the 1923 City Directory for Guelph. The fire insurance plan of the City of Guelph revised in 1946 (Attachment-2, Figure 10) shows 9 Omar Street as a wood frame dwelling with a wood shingle roof. Gordon Couling's photo of the building taken in 1974 (Attachment-2, Figure 11) shows insulbrick cladding over what was likely wood or stucco siding.

Evaluation of Significance

The subject property (9 Omar Street) does not merit individual designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act because it does not meet any of the prescribed criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest, according to Ontario Regulation 9/06 as amended by Ontario Regulation 569/22.

Design or Physical Value

Criteria 1: The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.

Staff Analysis: The building at 9 Omar Street is an example of a simple, late nineteenth century working class dwelling, however, it is not a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.

Criteria 2: The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.

Staff analysis: Building at 9 Omar Street does not display a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit. Apart from the original form of the house, most of the original exterior features and materials have been replaced.

Criteria 3: The property has design value or physical value because it demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.

Staff analysis: The property does not demonstrate a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.

Historical or Associative Value

Criteria 4: The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.

Staff analysis: Staff research did not indicate any direct association with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization, or institution that is significant to a community. The ownership by the Flaherty family is not significant to the community.

Criteria 5: The property has historical value or associative value because it yields, or has the potential to yield information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture.

Staff analysis: While houses like 9 Omar Street have the potential to contribute to an understanding working-class housing in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, research did not conclude that the property individually yields or has the potential to yield information that contributes to the understanding of a community or culture.

Criteria 6: The property has historical value or associative value because it demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.

Staff analysis: The builder and/or designer of 9 Omar Street is unknown and the design is typical of small, late nineteenth century workers' houses.

Contextual Value

Criteria 7: The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining, or supporting the character of an area.

Staff analysis: The neighbourhood surrounding 9 Omar Street is working-class housing but this home individually is not a particularly important supporter of the character of the area.

Criteria 8: The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually, or historically linked to its surroundings.

Staff analysis: 9 Omar Street has been substantially altered and the property is significantly linked to its surroundings.

Criteria 9: The property has contextual value because it is a landmark.

Staff analysis: 9 Omar Street is not a landmark.

Consultations

A severance application involving 7 and 9 Omar Street came to Heritage Guelph in 2018 as the owner at that time were intending to demolish both buildings. The resulting motions from that meeting were as follows:

THAT while Heritage Guelph supports the retention of built heritage resources, Heritage Guelph does not recommend that Council protect 7 and 9 Omar Street through individual designation under section 29, Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, and;

THAT Heritage Guelph has no objection to the property known as 7 and 9 Omar Street being removed from the Municipal Register of Cultural Heritage Properties, and;

THAT Heritage Guelph encourages the proponent to consider retaining salvageable elements of the building (e.g. exterior brick and wood window sashes) for possible reuse and integration into proposed new construction on the property.

The owner of both addresses did not elect to make an application for a demolition permit at that time. 7 Omar St has recently been sold. Heritage Guelph is being consulted with this update as the owner of 9 Omar is now proceeding with a demolition permit.

Attachments

Attachment-1 Property Location and Current Photos

Attachment-2 Historical Images

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